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AUTHOR	Chavez, Lydia
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ABSTRACT

This book tells the story of the California Civil Rights Initiative (CCRI), which became Proposition 209. This initiative promised to end the use of race and gender preferences in state employment, contracting, and education. The complex motivations and maneuvers of the people, organizations, and political parties involved in the effort to end affirmative action in California are described. In the post-election climate of 1994, the CCRI appeared to be offered at the right time and in the right place for California's Governor Pete Wilson and other Republican presidential prospects. Instead, the campaign resulted in one of the most ironic twists of recent political history, when the Republicans, who expected to use the CCRI to divide the Democrats, found instead that it divided their own party. The analysis probes the national implications of this state initiative in shaping affirmative action for years to come. The following chapters are included: (1) "Origins: Canon and Culture Wars on Campus"; (2) "Hitting A Nerve: The Angry White Males of 1994"; (3) "The Opposition: The Split between Northern and Southern California"; (4) "The Republican Party and Affirmative Action: How a Wedge Issue Cuts Many Ways"; (5) "Feminists, Minorities, and the Democratic Party: Democrats Search for a New Identity Politics"; (6) "The Ground War at Ground Zero: An Attempt To Revive the Grassroots"; (7) "Countdown: A Defining Moment, or the Color Bind"; and (8) "Stumbling to the Finish Line: Dole Grasps for Proposition 209 and the Opposition Reaches for David Duke." One appendix lists prominent figures in the history of the initiative, and the other is a time line. A list of 80 sources for further reading is presented. (SLD)

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